

DIME NOVEL ROUNDUP

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"STRIKES" THAT I HAVE MADE IN NOVELDOM

By Wm. M. Burns

In starting this letter-article, I wish to say that I am not, never was, and probably never will be, a novel collector. I deal in novels and story papers solely for the pleasure that I get from reading them. But I have complete files of several of the more common kinds of novels such as: The Deadwood Dick Library, Robin Hood Library, Beadle's Frontier Series, etc. All those are for trade, when satisfactory offers are made. I seldom sell or buy novels, but do lots of exchanging. Having a stock of 1200 to 1500 at all times, I have little difficulty in trading for such novels as interest me. I started reading novels at the age of eight. This was over thirty years ago, and I am still as fond of reading them as I was at the start. I inherited my love of reading from my father. He was a disciple of the old dime novel. My first strike was the discovery of a trunk full of old novels in the attic, that had belonged to dad: Old Sleuths, Young Sleuths, Little Chief, Log Cabins, Young Sports, Frank Reades, War Libraries, Beadle's Dime Novels, Munro's Ten Cent Novels and many others.

Well do I remember the first novel that I ever read. It was "Frank Reade, Jr., and His Airship in Asia." Well, this trunk full of novels kept me in reading for several years. Many of them I read two or three times each. This was way back in the country, 25 or 30 miles from the larger towns where novels were sold. In fact, these were the only novels I ever saw until my people moved to town. At this time black and whites had gone by and colored covers had come into their own. Frank Reade Weekly, James Boys Weekly, Jesse James Stories, Buffalo Bill Stories, New Nick Carter Weekly and a host of others were having their run then. Many of the boys and men of this town were novel readers and so naturally I got to trading novels. Strange as it may seem now, I found it hard to trade off my black and whites. I guess the bright colored covers being more attractive to the young eye, had something to do with it. But finally I ran across an old gentleman who had several thousand old novels and story papers stowed away in his attic. Well do I remember his words to me: "Bring

me as many of yours as you can lug and I'll load you up with mine, when you go home." I told him I had nearly a trunk full of black and whites, and he said: "All right, bring them along and I'll fill your trunk up with mine?" He did—and many more besides he gave me. This trade gave me several hundreds of black and whites and colored covers in about equal proportion and it also gave me Beadie's Weekly from No. 1 to 100, about 100 issues of Young Men of America in running numbers, three or four years' run of Golden Hours and a long run of Happy Days in early numbers. It was a big "strike," but I did not realize it at the time.

A few years after this, my people moved to the city in which I still reside. At this time I gave away all but about 100, which I hadn't read. This was a huge mistake, but who placed any especial value on novels in those days? In fact, most people considered them as so much junk, after once read. During this time I was buying several novels each week. If I remember correctly, they were Brave and Bold, Pluck and Luck, Secret Service and Buffalo Bill Stories, and trading all the time with local friends and parties in various parts of New England and the Middle West. Several of these friends, in various parts of the country, I am in touch with today. After a couple of years' residence in this city, one of our largest book stores went out of business. I bought several hundreds of their novels at one cent each, mostly Frank Reade Libraries, Beadie's Half Dimes and old Pluck and Lucks. This was another big "strike." At this time, also, I bought about a dozen second-hand Tip Top Quarterlies. These cost me 5c each. What would I not give if I had these old novels now! A few years after this I began to lose interest in novels, and once more gave away nearly all my entire stock. For over ten years, I guess I didn't read as many novels as I do now in one week. About three years ago I joined the Happy Hours Brotherhood. This re-aroused my interest in novels, and after several weeks hunting through old book stores, I finally located about 600 Old Sleuth Libraries in fine, uncut condition, and I bought them for two and one-half cents each. (Page the Lincoln Book Store.) This was a real "strike," indeed, and the 600 Old Sleuths was the real foundation of my present stock of 1200 to 1500 novels. I have since secured long runs of Golden Hours and Happy Days (my favorite boyhood papers,) a bound volume of New York Detective Library, containing Jesse James stories, a complete run of the old, original Union Jack Library, dated 1880-1883, bound in four huge volumes, a bound volume of The London Library, containing 13 novels that are re-prints of Munro's 10c Novels, published about 1880. Also a few Frank Starr's, Ornum's Munro's and Beadie's Dimes.

As I have probably gone far beyond the space that the editor allows for scribbling of this sort, I will have to sign off. Adios, Amigos.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Edward J. Smeltzer is the winner in the Membership Contest, for getting the most members. He is the only one who brought in any new members, so he captured all three prizes: A Beadle's New Dime Novel, a Noveltette Library and a Year's Membership in The Happy Hours Brotherhood.

Thanks, Ed, for your good work.

—Ralph F. Cummings.

Here's a bit of good news, boys: Be on the lookout for "The Novel World," another newcomer.

Frank T Fries has several Jack Wright stories that he has read and will trade three of them for any two J. Wrights or Frank Reades he hasn't read. Give titles of stories, instead of numbers. Here's a chance to make three good stories grow, where only two grew before.

Who can give me any information on D. W. Stevens, the author of Jesse James stories in The New York Detective Library and other libraries? Any information will be appreciated. Send to the Pub. of this magazine.

Bill McCafferty wants Nick Carter Weeklies, Young Glory, Young Klondike, Three Chums and others. Send him your lists, boys!

Impatient father (to small son, reading dime novel):

"It's eleven o'clock, son. You go up to bed at once!"

Small son (pleadingly): "Aw pop, I'm up to the place where Deadwood Dick is attacked by seventeen Indians—can't I stay up till I get to the place where he licks 'em, Huh, pop? Can't I, pop?"

Pop (sitting back in his easy chair, with a pleased smile on his face):

"Read the rest out loud, son!"

Arranged by W. B. McCafferty

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NOVEL SKETCHES, No. 4—Advance Ten Cent Novels. Published by Advance Pub. Co., 152 Worth St., New York. Early 80's. Size Beadle's Dime Novels. 100 to 112 pages. One column to page. Nice illustration on cover. Stories of the West, etc. Title of No. 13: "Onmanontah," a thrilling story of Indian life and adventure, by Prof. C. S. Dod. Rare one.

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PARTIAL LIST OF 1931 MEMBERS of H. H. B.

- No. 6. W. C. Miller, 922 W. Gramercy St., San Antonio, Texas.
- 17. Fred T. Singleton, 25 E. Palmer Ave., Detroit, Mich.
- 20. Fred Wainwright, Grayling, Mich.
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FOR SALE OR EXCHANGE

What Have You ??????

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ALSO BOOKS

A Journey to the Earth's Interior ; or, Have the Poles Really Been Discovered, by Marshall B. Gardner. This Great Book was recently quoted from in Wonder Stories Magazine. Bound in red cloth. Numerous fine illustrations, one in colors. Brand new.

Scott's Standard Postage Stamp Catalog, for 1924. 3 Routledge's 6 penny novels, fine shape, old. Same size, etc. as Hogarth House.

RALPH F. CUMMINGS

Route 1, Box 55

GRAFTON, MASS.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

The half dollar of 1838 with mint letter "O" is said to be worth \$50 to \$75, according to condition.

T. C. Harbaugh wrote under the pen name of Capt. Howard Holmes for various Beadle publications. He also used the pen name of Major A. F. Grant in writing for the Nickel, War and various other libraries.

The above extract is from a letter from Chas. A. Welton.

—Bill Burns.



The above scene is from the great Fred Fearnot series, now running in "Midget Monthly Magazine." Send 65c for a year's subscription, 2 genuine 25c novelties and 2 25c novels—the most liberal offer ever made. Frank T Fries, Orrville, O.

\$50 and more weekly, distributing circulars, samples, almanacs, house to house. Many firms pay \$2.50 to \$5.50 per 1,000 pieces. 25 of such firms names and addresses will be sent you for 25c.

Orphan Mail Order House
Box 304-R. Pontiac, Mich.

About 23 years ago, John G. Gathany, Jr., of Hallstead, Penna., was a reader and trader of dime novels. Any information as to his present whereabouts would be appreciated by his old friend, Wm. M. Burns, 15 Cottage St., Rockland, Maine.